

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2973

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to creating a career and technical high school graduation option for students meeting state standards in fundamental academic content areas.

Brief Description: Creating a career and technical high school graduation option for students meeting state standards in fundamental academic content areas.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Priest, Ormsby, Kenney, Kagi, Hasegawa, P. Sullivan, Moeller, Santos and Springer).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/26/06, 2/1/06 [DPS];

Appropriations: 2/4/06 [DPS(ED)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/9/06, 98-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 3/1/06, 47-0.

House Concurred.

Passed House: 3/4/06, 95-0.

Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the State Board of Education to reevaluate graduation requirements for students enrolled in vocationally intensive career and technical education (CTE) programs to ensure they have sufficient opportunity to complete the programs along with other state and local requirements.
- Authorizes the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop an alternative assessment for students in CTE programs that includes evaluation of a collection of work samples that is comparable in rigor to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.
- Requires each high school or school board to adopt course equivalencies for career and technical courses.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; P. Sullivan, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Haigh, Hunter, McDermott, Priest, Santos, Shabro, Tom and Wallace.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Education be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Alexander, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McDonald, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Bailey, Buri, Chandler, Clements, Cody, Conway, Darneille, Dunshee, Grant, Haigh, Hinkle, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, McDermott, Miloscia, Pearson, Priest, Schual-Berke, P. Sullivan, Talcott and Walsh.

Staff: Charlie Gavigan (786-7340).

Background:

High School Graduation Requirements.

Most graduation requirements are established by the State Board of Education (SBE). The current SBE requirements are:

- (1) accumulate 13.5 credits in the content areas of English, math, science, social studies, health and fitness, arts, and occupational education, plus an additional 5.5 credits of electives;
- (2) complete a high school and beyond plan; and
- (3) complete a culminating project.

Local school districts can adopt additional courses or other requirements. School districts also determine whether and to what extent career and technical courses are equivalent to academic courses and meet graduation requirements in core academic areas.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, most students will also be required to obtain a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) to obtain a diploma. Students must meet the state standards in reading, writing, and mathematics on the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) to earn a CAA. Science will be added in 2010.

Career and Technical Education.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) establishes standards for and reviews and approves all career and technical education (CTE) programs offered by local school districts. The standards distinguish between exploratory and preparatory courses. In preparatory courses, students are expected to demonstrate a level of competency that includes application of the EALRs to meet industry defined standards for a specific career; demonstrate

leadership and employability skills; and be employment ready or prepared for postsecondary options. The occupational skills in an approved program are written based on nationally or locally recognized industry standards.

A number of CTE programs lead to a credential or certificate recognized by the appropriate industry as a benchmark level of knowledge and skills.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The SBE is required to reevaluate graduation requirements for students in vocationally intensive and rigorous CTE programs to ensure that students enrolled in these programs have the opportunity to earn their CAA, complete the CTE program, and complete other state and local graduation requirements. The SBE must report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 2007.

The SPI must develop an objective alternative assessment for career and technical education programs, which must be comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that a student must demonstrate on the WASL. The alternative assessment includes an evaluation of a collection of work samples prepared and submitted by an applicant who is enrolled in a CTE program. The SPI will develop guidelines for the collection of work samples in consultation with community and technical colleges, employers, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, apprenticeship programs, and other regional and national experts in career and technical education.

Each high school or school board must adopt course equivalencies for high school CTE courses using a course equivalency approval procedure adopted by the board. The equivalency can be for whole or partial credit. Career and technical courses determined to be equivalent to academic core courses must be accepted as meeting core requirements, including graduation requirements, if the courses are recorded on the student's transcript using the academic department designation and title.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 2, 2006.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (Education) (Original bill) The critical question is whether we are going to have CTE programs in high school. This must be an active decision, not a passive one. There is increased pressure to fill the school day with academic courses in preparation or remediation for the WASL or to fulfill other EALRs and graduation requirements. This proposal creates flexibility and a clear pathway for CTE students to achieve a diploma. This provides great potential for students who do not want to attend a four-year university but have a passion and commitment to be successful. It opens the doors for them to pursue a rigorous CTE program. The CTE programs are challenging, support high standards, and can ensure rigor,

success, and motivation for students. The CTE provides rigor and relevance to a large number of students.

(With concerns) Additional work is needed to define the programs that qualify for the option. We also need to ensure that these programs are actually available for students, especially students in smaller school districts. It would be better to provide a description of the programs rather than specify the number of hours. The need for this option is driven by the use of the WASL as a high stakes graduation requirement, and this is not addressed. There is concern about creating a second tier diploma.

Testimony For: (Appropriations) None.

Testimony Against: (Education) None.

Testimony Against: (Appropriations) None.

Persons Testifying: (Education) (In support) Representative Priest, prime sponsor; Gil Mendoza, Tacoma School District; Bruce McBurney, Central Kitsap School District; Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education; Lisa Macfarlane, League of Education Voters; and Don Rash, Association of Washington School Principals.

(With concerns) Wes Pruitt, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Rod Duckworth, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Gary King, Washington Education Association.

Persons Testifying: (Appropriations) None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Education) None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Appropriations) None.